

VISION EDINA COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

CITY OF EDINA, MINNESOTA

Report from the Vision Edina community visioning and planning initiative conducted between July and December 2014



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PREPARED BY:



VISION
EDINA

HOSTED BY:

The City of Edina



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1. INTRODUCTION

The Vision Edina initiative has aimed to define a shared vision for the City of Edina. Hosted by the City of Edina, it has been a broad-based and inclusive community visioning process.

From a strategic planning perspective, Vision Edina examines the issues that have been identified as having the highest priority within the community. The initiative examined future trends in cities across North America and the world, and how generational values are changing. This was also linked to local aspirations, values and desires for the future. This process, and the survey results included in this report, enables a clearer understanding of what people might be looking for in Edina in 2030 and beyond. Vision Edina has represented an opportunity for all residents to have a say, and contribute to creating the shared future vision.

The Vision Edina initiative worked with local residents, organization and businesses to explore:

- What is unique and important about living in Edina?
- Where is there opportunity or need to evolve or change?
- How can we continue to progress in order to keep the City relevant, attractive and progressive?

The engagement portion of this important planning process ran from September to December 2014, and gathered significant community input, which is summarized in this report. This extensive community engagement and input was obtained in order to ascertain the what, where and how this community will reach it's full potential.

The City of Edina partnered with Future iQ Partners, an international consultancy company, to design the process. The key role played by Future iQ Partners includes:

- Conducted unique background research on urban and city trends, and demographic profiles.
- Benchmarked Edina against similar high-end inner ring city locations in successful large North American cities.
- Designed and facilitated the Vision Edina 'Think Tank' process, to explore a range of plausible futures.
- Designed and conducted extensive community engagement session and workshops.
- Undertook detailed data analysis of survey results and citizen input, to help define a shared vision and preliminary action plan.

Vision Edina is part of the overall community process to update the long-term vision for the City of Edina. Vision Edina will also serve as an important foundation for other strategic efforts, such as the City's Comprehensive Plan and Capital Improvement Plans. Vision Edina has been flagged as an important priority by the City Council.



2.0 VISION EDINA PROCESS

The Vision Edina Process was a unique customized community visioning and planning initiative. The program design was co-operatively developed between the Future iQ Partners team and the City of Edina Staff, and endorsed by the City Council.

2.1 TIMELINE

The Vision Edina began in earnest in August 2014, with initial meetings, research and community visits. Initial interviews and meetings were held with City staff, Council and community stakeholders. The process of community workshops and engagements followed the following timeline.

Phase 1 (August 2014)	Background research on existing and future trends.
Phase 2 (September 2014)	Local 'think-tank' process; exploration of future options and development of plausible future scenarios.
Phase 3 (October to December 2014)	Community and sector workshops providing detailed community input.
Phase 4 (December 2014 to January 2015)	Analysis of results and defining the emerging shared vision.

This timeline was designed to begin work after the summer vacation period, and to have the community engagement completed prior to the Christmas break. This allowed approximately 3.5 months for community engagement and discussion.

2.2 METHODOLOGY

The Vision Edina process was predominantly designed around using a scenario planning methodology. This approach has been developed by Future iQ Partners for use in regional and community planning and offers a robust and insightful technique to explore future options and implications. The specific methodology for scenario planning is outlined in the report, Vision Edina – 'Scenarios of the Future'. The methodology to collect and analysis the data from the community engagement surveys is outlined in the following sections.



3.0 BACKGROUND RESEARCH

As part of the Vision Edina process, considerable regional research and existing demographic data was reviewed. In addition, two unique pieces of research were undertaken by Future iQ Partners to complement the existing body of information. These included a Benchmark Analysis that profiles Edina to other comparable Cities in the USA. Also, Future iQ Partners undertook an international scan and review of important emerging trends that are shaping Cities in developed countries in the Northern Hemisphere. This review provides a glimpse into how city living might evolve in developed metropolises over the next several decades.

3.1 BENCHMARK ANALYSIS

One of the key aspects of Future iQ Partners' background research in preparation for the Vision Edina process is the preparation of a complete economic profile and benchmark analysis of the community. Communities commonly use benchmark approaches as a means of both highlighting their strengths and identifying best practices for improvement. Many of the analyses of this type also utilize a competitive framework to identify those cohort communities that serve as the basis for comparison. The focus of the analysis presented through this work is to identify and quantify the existing strengths within the community, but also to highlight areas that may be affected by future growth.

As a preliminary step in the analytic process, Future iQ Partners staff corresponded with a number of community leaders to garner nominations for a number of potential benchmark communities. These nominations were of critical importance as they validated the perceived standing of the community both in terms of size as well as economic vitality. These nominations were further validated by size and other common measures to create a benchmark cohort of eleven comparison communities.

- Bellevue, Washington
- Bethesda, Maryland
- Carmel, Indiana
- Highland Park, Illinois,
- Lee's Summit, Missouri
- Littleton, Colorado
- Manhattan Beach, California
- Menlo Park, California,
- Newton, Massachusetts
- Shaker Heights, Ohio
- University Park, Texas

The City of Edina was compared against each of these communities, as well as a cohort average on a number of demographic and economic measures ranging from population growth and median age to median household



income and median housing value. The benchmark measures were selected both on the basis of available and timely comparative data, as well as to provide a comprehensive competitive profile of each of the communities. The analysis also provided key insight into many of the areas of potential future growth for Edina as it continues to remain competitive within a broader regional and national context.

The benchmark analysis presented suggests that Edina, Minnesota is both a highly attractive and competitive community when compared to a body of its peers, and that it shares many of the challenges faced by inner ring suburbs in the United States. Communities of all sizes have witnessed unprecedented changes and opportunities in the last thirty years as the global economy has evolved and the nation's population has aged at an historic rate. A variety of lessons are continuing to be learned as cities confront each of these challenges, and many of these same lessons shape the conversation that is taking place in Edina.

Edina can boast a highly educated and prosperous population that is intimately tied to the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan region. It can also point to the commitment that it has placed on its education system as a key draw for new families into the community. Finally, it is clear that a certain level of prosperity exists here that may not be present elsewhere, and that this is reflected in the numerous amenities provided for its residents. Edina is a community that can certainly be proud of its accomplishments.

There are also a number of challenges presented in the findings of the analysis. The city does attract a large number of new residents each year. However, it does not do as well as its peers in attracting the key 25 to 44 demographic that are so highly sought. Much of this can be accounted for by the intense rivalry that exists in the communities throughout the region to attract young families to support school enrollment and property values. The community does see a number of young people come into the city each year. Conversations might emerge as to how to effectively retain this student population after graduation.

The aging of the city's population is also of some concern, principally as it is occurring more rapidly than the nation, as a whole. This is not an uncommon phenomenon as it is shared by most of the communities in the peer group. One area where the community might look for improvement is in the development of a stronger sense of work-life balance within the city. There are no clear answers or "best practices" as to how to address what is an unprecedented trend. Rather, the challenge presented to Edina and other communities is how to balance development and public investments to create active communities that meet the needs of both the young and the old.

Finally, the benchmark analysis informed other aspects of the Vision Edina process in presenting a profile of the community as it currently exists, as well as illuminating a number of the important trends that have shaped that profile. As the community opened the dialogue that will ultimately shape its future direction, the benchmark analysis serves as a foundation upon which to measure future success. It highlighted a number of the key attributes of the community, including its high quality of life and highly educated population, and galvanized those and other attributes as the bedrock upon which future growth and development strategies can be built.



3.2 CITIES OF THE FUTURE

As part of preparing for the Vision Edina project, it was identified that a 20-30 year future timeframe was considered appropriate for this planning work. It is well recognized that significant major trends are reshaping the way people live in cities, and how cities function and operate. Because of the speed of change, and the anticipated rate of future development, it was considered important to undertake research and scan for likely significant trends that could impact in a material way on the City of Edina within the planning time horizon.

Cities are becoming one of the most influential factors shaping the future of the planet. The world population is becoming increasingly urban, in 2008, for the first time in history, more than half the world's population lived in cities. On the current trajectory, by 2050 the urban population is estimated to be 6.3 billion (66% of the world's projected population). Additionally, more than 60 percent of the area projected to be urban in 2030 has yet to be built. As more people are anticipated to be living in cities and the area that cities occupy continues to increase in the next decades, it is essential to examine how cities can evolve into the future.

'Cities of the Future - Anticipating Trends and Possibilities' is based on scientific research and current trend analysis. We have endeavored to draw this information from various areas into one engaging visual thought piece, which shows trends that have the potential for widespread adoption over the next two decades. This information is presented to encourage people to explore how the future could play out during this timeframe and to discover what could be the future implications and possibilities.

There are approximately 20 major dimensions, grouped under the following headings:

- Neighborhoods & Communities
- Culture & Education
- Health & Wellness
- Ecology & Sustainability
- Infrastructure
- Energy

Our focus is primarily on presenting examples that incorporate a balanced approach to the transformation of cities in the future, comprising economic, social and ecological perspectives. Macro trends such as declining supplies of fossil fuels, climate change, technological advancement and dependence, and escalating global populations are creating increased levels of uncertainty. However, embedded in these changes are new opportunities. Renewable energy and local food systems offer potential new economic pathways. Technology could fundamentally alter how educational and social services are delivered, removing the barriers to access even in relatively remote locations.

Future iQ Partners have presented the ideas in 'Cities of the Future - Anticipating Trends and Possibilities' to provide examples of what is possible. While this is drawn from current research, this is not the complete 'solution'. This report represents an attempt determine what may be possible in a city like Edina in the next 20 years. This report can be downloaded from the www.visionedina.com website.



4.0 COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

It is essential in any comprehensive or strategic planning effort to consider the perspectives of those most affected by any changes considered. This is especially true in the public sector, as the views of citizens are often ignored in favor of speed or pragmatism. The City Council of Edina, in launching the Vision Edina initiative recognized the value in building consensus around both a preferred future as well as the strategic direction required to reach it. Future iQ Partners was contracted to both aid in this effort as well as to collect and analyze the feedback of the community throughout the process.

4.1 THINK TANK WORKSHOP

The first step in the Vision Edina community engagement was to conduct the future 'Think Tank' workshop, which developed a range of plausible future scenarios for the City. The Scenario Planning process provided a 'vehicle' to be used in the process of building a shared vision for the future of the City of Edina. Approximately 110 key stakeholders attended the 'Think Tank' workshop, held over two evenings on September 9 and 11, 2014. The participants who were invited to attend the workshop represented a cross-section of organizations, interest groups and neighborhood perspectives. The Scenarios of the Future envisioned by the think tank responses, as well as the key driver dimensions are presented below.





The results of this event and related materials can be found in the [Vision Edina – ‘Scenarios of the Future’](#) report hosted on the Vision Edina project website. This scenario framework then provided the basis the subsequent community engagement workshops.

4.2 COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOPS

Interested stakeholders were able to participate in the survey process either by attending one of a number of community conversations held through October to mid December 2014, or completing an online version of the survey hosted on the Vision Edina website.

The City of Edina facilitated the scheduling of approximately 40 community engagement sessions. Citizens and stakeholder groups across the community were offered the opportunity to host their own workshop, or people had the opportunity to participate in a series of advertised public events. The various types of face to face engagement sessions included:

- Open public meetings
- Neighborhood associations
- School classes
- Various boards, associations and organizations
- City Staff and Boards and Commissioners.

The workshop content presented at these face-to-face sessions included reviewing the scenario matrix and results from the Think Tank, reviewing external trends and research, and then discussion on local issues. In some cases, supporting information such as posters of Cities of the Future was displayed and available for attendees to review. Typically workshops ranged in length from 1.5 to 2.0 hours, and were presented by Future iQ Partners or City of Edina staff.

All the participants at the workshops were invited to complete a comprehensive survey to gather their views and comments. Citizens and other interested stakeholders were asked throughout the course of completing the survey to consider the ways in which their preferences along a number of policy dimensions might shape their preferred future, as well as to identify specific ways in which the City is currently moving either towards or away from that preference.

It should be noted that being a resident of the City of Edina was not a predetermining requirement to complete the survey. The engagement process aimed to collect the views of residents and stakeholders. Stakeholders were considered to be people who had some vested interest in the future of the city, whilst not being a resident. Such stakeholders, for example, included some students at the high school and people who work within the City of Edina. In many cases, such stakeholders hold important and influential positions within various organizations that make up the fabric of the community. This said, one of the profiling questions in the survey helps identify people who live within or outside Edina, and that data can be extracted and examined separately.



4.3 VISION EDINA SURVEYS

The primary means of soliciting comment on the outcomes of the Vision Edina process came in the form of a survey instrument designed by Future iQ with the input of City staff. The survey questions considered both the plausible scenario outcomes designed in this process, as well as many of the key drivers that may facilitate movement from an expected to a preferred future.

4.3.1 SURVEY DESIGN

The survey instrument designed through this process was intended to assess support for a comprehensive vision for the City of Edina, as well as to gauge the level of consensus around a strategy built upon the drivers of commercial and residential redevelopment, and drivers associated with strengthening the community's social fabric and character. Feedback was solicited in a variety of ways, measuring both reactions to the plausible scenario spaces designed in the Vision Edina Think Tank as well as to the key drivers that differentiate between these spaces. It is important to measure each of these sentiments separately as doing so reveals a deeper level of personal support for a given preferred future. Similarly, the survey design encouraged thoughtful consideration of the implications of each of the key drivers and its potential impact on the city's future.

Each of the nineteen questions designed for the survey were intended to either consider one of these facets or to identify the respondent in some fashion. Questions were worded in an objective but slightly positive fashion so as to convey the momentum of the process. This was intentional as the prevailing sense of the Think Tank respondents suggested that each of the four scenario spaces as well as the endpoints of each of the key driver axes had positive implications and that no plausible scenario represented a “worst case” possibility. Any directionality, which may be implied in both the scenario spaces and survey instrument, suggests movement diverging from the current or status quo in some fashion.

4.3.2 SURVEY DELIVERY

Citizens and other interested stakeholders, were invited to complete the Future Scenarios Survey by one of two means. First, respondents were able to manually fill out a print version of the survey by attending one of a number of public sessions held throughout the City over a two-and-a-half month period. This process accounted for a large majority of total responses (402 of 591 or 68 percent).

Second, in late November, the option to take the survey on-line was also introduced. Citizens were able to access a short video explaining the process, review the scenario material and then complete the survey online. The survey was open throughout the public outreach process and was publicized through a variety of means ranging from postings on the Vision Edina website, discussions in Speak Up Edina, and other forms of social media such as Facebook. The online survey was closed on December 29. An additional 198 or 34 percent of total responses were collected through this process.



4.3.3 SAMPLE SIZE AND A NOTE ON STATISTICAL VALIDITY

It is common in any analysis of survey methodologies to consider the role that sample size and selection may have on the potential statistical validity of the results generated. The 591 responses collected were received through a self-identification or voluntary process. Respondents self-selected to either attend one of the public sessions or complete the online survey. No individual respondents were specifically targeted or required to provide feedback, though members of a number of community groups were encouraged. There were no specific expectations regarding an optimal survey sample nor were any steps taken to either randomize the respondent base or stratify the sample to be representative of the city's population, as a whole. Rather, the intent of the survey process was to solicit the feedback of as many citizens as possible.

The design or lack thereof of the survey sample makes discussion of statistical validity somewhat difficult. The sample is fairly consistent with the gender distribution of the city's population, but does not strictly follow the city's age profile. Similarly, the geographic divisions established in the instrument do not relate easily to any formally defined boundaries, complicating spatial validation. As such, it is only possible to consider the statistical validity of the responses within the sample, rather than being representative of the community, as a whole. A number of diagnostic tests of statistical validity have been performed where possible and will be noted.

Finally, respondents were asked to provide comment to expand upon their answers to a number of questions. In each of these instances, the relevant numerical and textual responses were analyzed through Profiler Plus, a software application typically used by psychologists in administering personality analyses. The intent of this analysis is to both identify the key terms that persisted throughout the responses, as well as the thematic frame in which each of these terms are found. This is especially important in the present analysis, as there are a number of terms, ranging from Southdale to bike lanes, and surrounding communities such as Richfield and Eden Prairie that are regarded both positively and negatively in comment.

The resulting analysis produced a series of word clouds that are presented throughout this analysis. As a point of interpretation, the differing font sizes are determined by the frequency by which a word is mentioned. The differing colors represent whether the word was primarily presented in a positive or negative frame. Both of these aspects are important in analyzing the degree to which the comments presented throughout the survey either confirm or contradict the numerical responses.



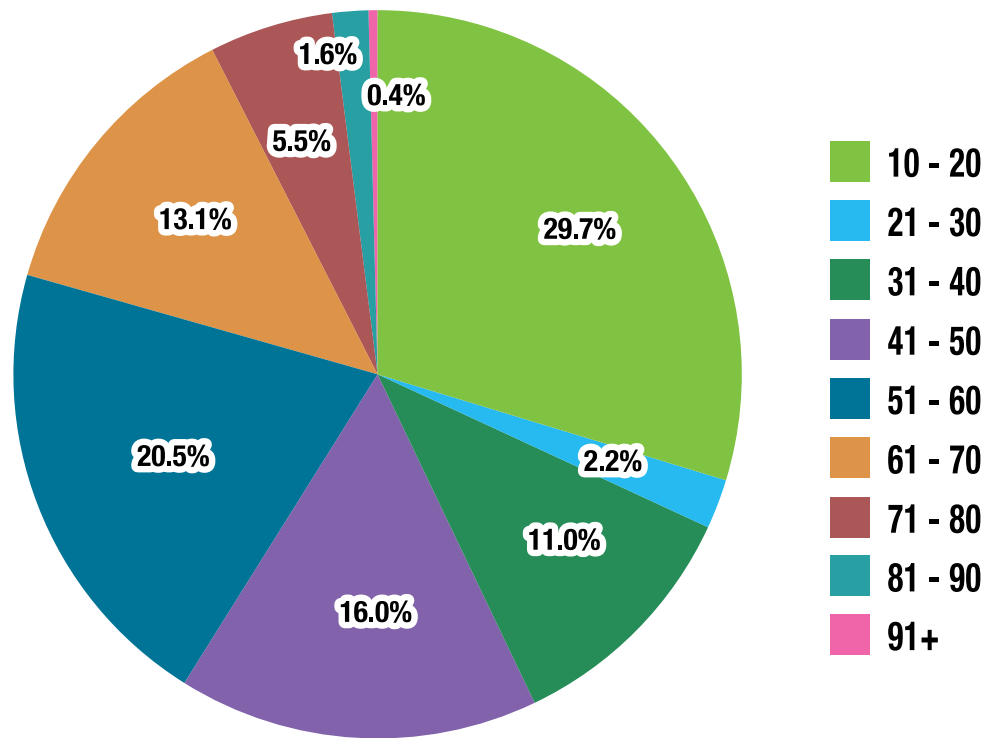
4.4 RESPONDENT CHARACTERISTICS

The responses to the Future Scenarios Survey represent the perspectives of a unique blend of individuals connected in some way to the City of Edina. The vision of the City’s future that emerges through the survey responses is further shaped by their defining characteristics. These same characteristics, including gender, age, and geography also defines areas of differing outlooks in the City.

Fifty-one percent, or 264 survey respondents are female, whereas 48.5 percent or 248 are male. (Please note that the number of responses to each question varies as not all respondents answered every question.) The respondent base is slightly more highly male than the City’s population as a whole (53.3 percent female, 46.7 percent male), but the difference is not statistically significant given the sample size. We will see that the perspectives of men and women vary in a number of key areas and that these differences have some influence on the shape of the preferred future.

Age is also a key factor in identifying differences between survey respondents. The age profile of the sample base here varies from Edina’s age composition in a number of important ways. The distribution of the survey respondents appears below.

Respondent Age





At first glance we see that the share of respondents in two key age groups – 10 to 20 and 51 to 60 represents more than half of all survey responses. This represents a significant source of bias in the survey responses and one that will prove to be especially influential. The magnitude of this shift can be demonstrated when comparing the distribution of survey respondents to Edina's population in these age groups.

	Edina Population	Survey Respondents	Difference
10 to 20	15.1%	29.7%	14.6%
21 to 30	8.6%	2.2%	-6.4%
31 to 40	11.2%	11.0%	-0.2%
41 to 50	16.7%	16.0%	-0.7%
51 to 60	17.4%	20.5%	3.1%
61 to 70	12.7%	13.1%	0.4%
71 to 80	9.0%	5.5%	-3.5%
81 and over	9.3%	2.0%	-7.3%

First, we see that the respondents between the ages of 10 and 20 are nearly twice as numerous as their respective share of the city's population. Similarly, we see that the share of respondents in the next oldest age cohort – ages 21 to 30 is a fourth of the relative population. Alignment between the respondent base and population cohorts is much better in the next three age groups, but again diverges among citizens aged seventy and older.

Much of the disparity or bias in respondent age can be accounted for when considering the means by which the Future Scenarios Survey was administered. Many of the respondents in the age 10 to 20 cohort are Edina High School students that attended sessions held at the school during October. Similarly, younger residents were more likely to respond to the online survey instrument. Conversely, whilst some public events were focused specifically on soliciting the feedback of the City's older population, these events did not result in high attendance. This disparity will be especially important in light of the future-focused tone of the survey.

The final way in which survey respondents were classified was by both where they lived, and for how long. Respondents were first asked to locate themselves in one of four quadrants within the city. This distribution is presented below.



Answer Options	Response Percent
Northwest (west of Hwy 100 and north of Hwy 62)	27.4%
Southwest (west of Hwy 100 and south of Hwy 62)	26.3%
Northeast (east of Hwy 100 and north of Hwy 62)	30.7%
Southeast (east of Hwy 100 and south of Hwy 62)	15.6%

An additional 53 survey respondents indicated that they did not live in Edina. These non-resident responses are nonetheless quite valuable as they represent the perspectives of a number of key individuals associated with organizations ranging from city government to Edina Public Schools. This group also includes a smaller number of former residents of the City that expressed an interest in participating in the process.

It is admittedly difficult to align the geographic distribution presented above with any broad population estimates. However, a rough comparison of the respondent distribution to population aligned by census tract shows significant correlation. The age and gender distributions of the respondents in each of these regions are also fairly consistent.

Answer Options	Response Percent
Less than 5 years	9.2%
5 - 10 years	12.5%
10 - 20 years	32.6%
20 - 30 years	14.6%
30 - 40 years	6.6%
Longer than 40 years	11.5%
Not Applicable (i.e. don't live in Edina)	13.1%

Respondents were also asked to share how long they have (or haven't) lived in Edina. This distribution is presented above. We see that a majority of respondents (54.8 percent) have lived in the city less than twenty years. This correlates strongly with the youthful age bias found in the sample distribution. It is easy to assume that the remainder of respondents (32.7 percent) who reported living in the community for more than twenty years represent a core of "lifelong residents." This would be somewhat inaccurate considering the relative age of the respondent base. Similarly, many of the respondents who reported living in the city fewer than five years were found in the older age cohorts.



Another interesting trend emerges when considering the 13.1 percent of respondents who do not live in Edina. Roughly half of these respondents are employed in some manner either by the City of Edina or Edina Public Schools. The other half represents former residents of the city that still have ties to the community or people who work in some capacity within the City area. This again presents an interesting dynamic as former residents may have different perspectives on the city than those who only see it through the lens of employment.

Finally, if we assume that no individual answered the survey more than once and accounting for the sixty-seven responses submitted by residents of other cities, we see that the 524 resident respondents represent less than 1.4 percent of the 38,457 residents over the age of 15 that were invited to complete the survey. This again represents a relatively low, but exceedingly useful response rate. Those individuals that responded to the Future Scenarios Survey represent some of the most engaged citizens in the community, and those who will be asked to contribute in shaping the City's future.

5.0 KEY SURVEY FINDINGS

An overarching theme, which persists throughout the following analysis, is one of a measured openness to change. The consensus formed among the numerous respondents who participated in the process finds a preferred future close to the midpoint of each of the four scenario spaces envisioned in the Think Tank. This consensus is further confirmed by a sense of ambivalence towards each of the specific scenario descriptions. Each is viewed as plausible, yet there is some uncertainty as to which would present the best possible outcome. A similar consensus emerged around many of the key policy drivers, ranging from commercial development to regional leadership. This suggests that there is some desire for change in the community, but that there is also uncertainty as to both what changes should occur and who should be responsible for bringing about that change. There are a number of areas where there is a stronger desire for change, including in the expansion of transportation options and the promotion of environmentally-friendly policies and practices. This is both true in the case of redevelopment strategy as it is of community character.

There are a number of notable differences among respondent subgroups that break this consensus in interesting ways. The analysis presented will discuss many of these, including generational differences, regional differences, and the stark difference in the perspectives of those who may live outside of the city. Each of these divisions presents an intriguing glimpse into the forces or groups that may bear some influence in shaping the city's strategic direction, as well as those that may be most profoundly affected by it.

The results presented in the following analysis represent the perspectives of full sample of survey respondents. The analysis of these responses, as well as the composition of the respondents themselves revealed a number of differences in perspective between genders, age groups, and residents of certain parts of the city. The most notable of these findings will be highlighted as warranted. However, Future iQ Partners strongly believes that the best way to discuss the implications of this data to the Vision Edina initiative is to allow stakeholders and the general public to fully explore the results. We have developed an extensive data visualization platform that facilitates exploration of this nature by allowing the user to sort responses by any of the respondent characteristics described below. Users can also track changes in the consensus points identified in the analysis by these same categories. The platform can be found at www.visionedina.com

We encourage all readers to visit the platform after digesting this analysis.

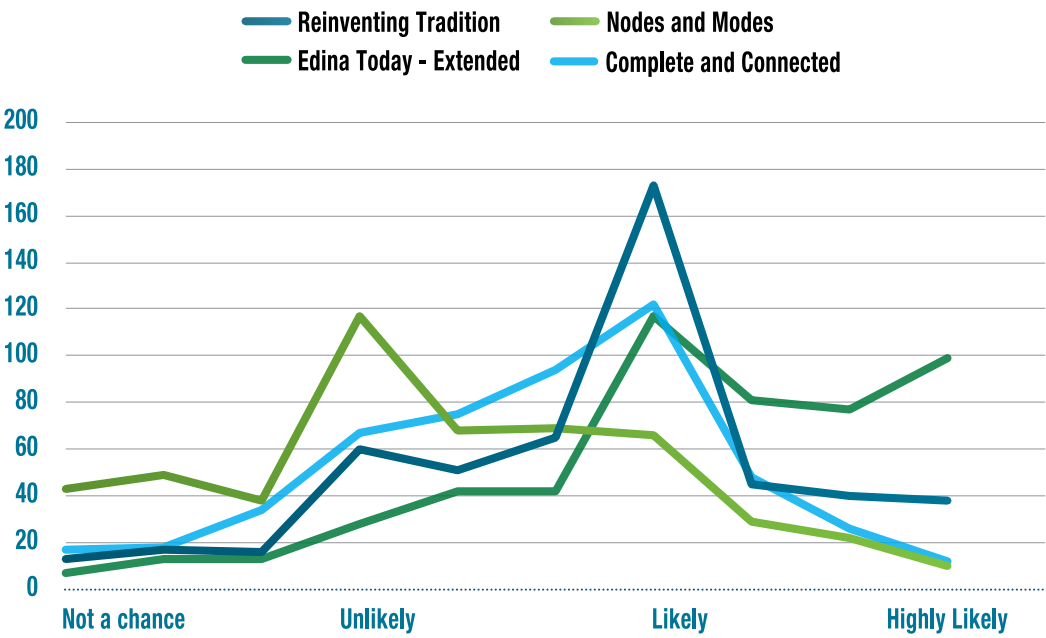


5.1 SCENARIO PREFERENCES

Survey respondents were presented with a series of questions regarding the scenario spaces developed in the Vision Edina Think Thank. Respondents were first asked to rate the likelihood that they would EXPECT the City of Edina to realize each of the four plausible scenarios in the future. Second, respondents were asked to measure their level of satisfaction related to their PREFERRED outcome. The distribution of responses to each of these questions is included below.

5.1.1 SCENARIO EXPECTED LIKELIHOODS

Based on the current trajectory and direction of Edina, how likely do you think it is for each of the scenarios to be the EXPECTED future that will actually emerge for Edina?



The chart above depicts the likelihood curve for each of the four plausible scenarios, based on respondents' expectations. We see some consensus regarding the likelihood of three of the four scenarios, with the fourth – Nodes and Modes perceived as the least likely possible outcome. This scenario represents the greatest movement along both of the two driver axes of 'Balancing Edina's Redevelopment' and 'Community Fabric and Character.'

The highest degree of confidence, as measured by the sum of responses rated 'likely' to 'highly likely' relate to the Edina Today – Extended scenario, which is viewed as the most likely expected outcome. This also represents the most conservative outcome in terms of movement along each of the driver axes, or that which is closest to the

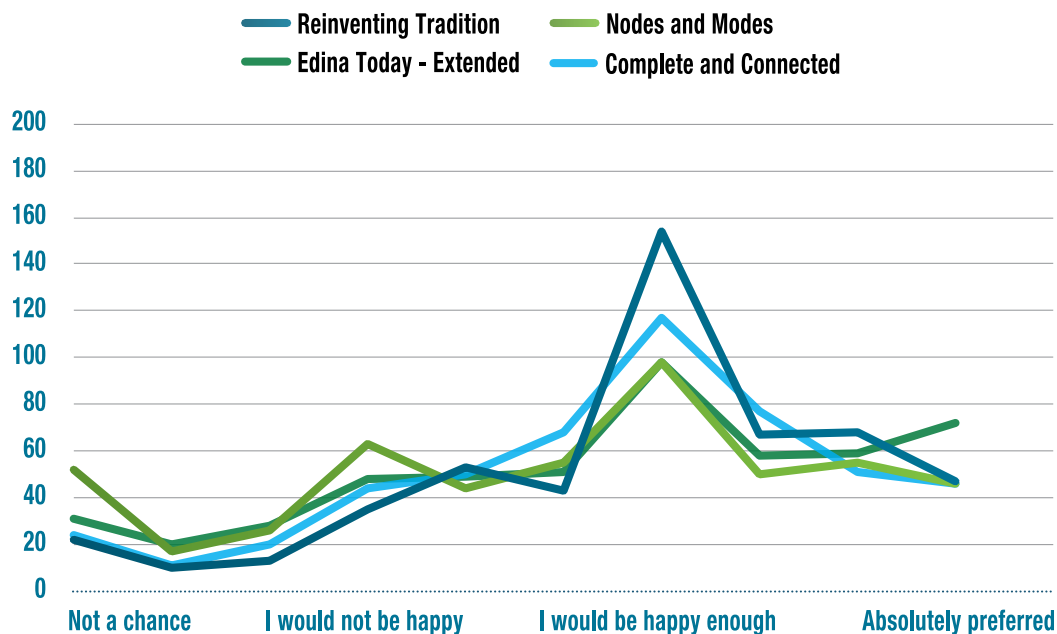


existing community character and development mix. This sentiment was shared by all respondents, but was felt most strongly by the younger cohorts. This again represents an expectation of the future without considering the possibility for change, which naturally binds respondents in a current-looking framework.

A final interesting trend can be observed in comparing the likelihood curves of the Reinventing Tradition and Complete and Connected scenarios. Realizing each of these scenarios requires movement along one of the two driver axes, but not both. The likelihood curve for the Complete and Connected scenario space is more moderate than that of the Reinventing Tradition scenario space, though both outcomes are viewed as at least somewhat likely. This suggests a degree of disconnect among respondents in their perceptions of the two driver axes. Further, it also suggests that respondents believe that some change is likely to occur in either the City's development mix or its fabric and character, but not both.

5.1.2 PREFERRED SCENARIO OUTCOMES

Considering the four plausible scenarios, to which degree does each one reflect the future you would PREFER to see for the City of Edina?



When respondents were asked to consider their preferences as to Edina's future, a similar theme of measured or pragmatic optimism emerges. The majority of respondents suggested at least some measure of happiness with each of the scenario outcomes. Nearly twice as many respondents identified the Edina Today – Extended outcome as being absolutely preferred, but this still only represent fourteen percent of all respondents. The Reinventing



Tradition scenario outcome had the highest average preference rating of 6.72, which suggests a preference that is only slightly more positive than neutral. The Complete and Connected scenario outcome had an average preference rating of 6.48, slightly higher than Edina Today – Extended's average of 6.42. The Nodes and Modes scenario outcome received the most relatively negative average rating of 5.98, but this too is almost exactly neutral.

The relatively tight grouping of preference feelings towards each of the four plausible scenario spaces demonstrates behavior, which is referred to in economics as "satisficing." This hybrid term combines the absolute expression of satisfaction with the more pragmatic expression of sufficiency. This suggests that the respondents generally viewed each of the plausible scenario outcomes as "good enough" to meet most of their needs, but not optimal in meeting all of their needs. This trend is again strongest among younger residents who expressed the strongest preference for both the Complete and Connected and Nodes and Modes scenario outcomes, but viewed the other two alternatives as more likely.

5.1.3 POSSIBLE LIMITATIONS

It is again important to recall that each of the plausible scenario spaces presented in the survey has a number of positive characteristics. As such, it is possible that the manner in which these aspects and outcomes were presented may have biased respondent assessments. While this is a reasonable concern, it is also important to note that there is a significant degree of change conveyed in both the scenario spaces and the driver axes suggesting that differences do exist. This provides sufficient analytical space to consider true preferences.

There is an inherent limitation in the way that both the expected and preferred scenario outcome likelihood measures were designed, however. Recall that respondents were asked to provide their expected likelihood and sentiment towards each of the four scenario spaces in each question. Further, we can assume that respondents completed the assessment of each scenario space independent of each other. As such, while we can measure expectations and preferences for each, these questions do not reveal an expectation or preference for any particular scenario outcome. What they do reveal is a moderate degree of support for each outcome and an equally moderate acceptance of change or risk. It is necessary to explore the preferences of the survey respondents along a number of dimensions related to each of the driver axes in order to paint a clearer picture of where consensus exists within the defined scenario space.

5.1.4 FACTORS MOST LIKELY TO IMPACT EXPECTED SCENARIO OUTCOME

Respondents were also asked to list which factor or factors might most strongly influence the trajectory that the community heads in the next twenty years. A number of prevalent themes emerged in this feedback, but three appear to be most significant. The respondents believe that a community-driven process is needed, that the City Council must take a stronger role in leadership, and that demographic shifts will have a profound influence on the Edina of the future. Each of these themes is consistent throughout the scenario descriptions and persists in feedback to other questions.

Aspects of community composition, community life, and community consensus are all identified as factors affecting Edina's expected future. Each of these general thematic elements is viewed positively, though there is some

Similarly, a significant number of respondents who identify the importance of community in this process also point to an inherent tension that seems to exist in Edina between the needs of the community and market-driven demands. For example, this 41-50 year-old male wishes to see “a council that takes leadership in the community and not follow consumers.” Respondents are quite protective of the image and perceived exclusivity of the community and are most strongly supportive of a process that protects Edina’s heritage.

The final prevalent theme that is expected to strongly impact Edina's future is the changing demographics of the community. Respondents generally conceded that any changes that occur within the city will occur with the interest of school-aged families in mind. This was viewed both positively and negatively as some of the younger respondents expressed concern that a family-driven strategy may make life in Edina unattainable to most young professionals. A number of respondents also connected the residential teardowns currently occurring in the city as an example of this focus.

[illegible]

City of Edina, MN, January 2015



5.1.5 MOST ATTRACTIVE ASPECTS OF PREFERRED SCENARIO OUTCOMES

Respondents were also asked to identify those characteristics of the four plausible scenario outcomes that they found most attractive. The thematic frames here are all overwhelmingly positive and closely echo many of the expected drivers discussed earlier. The prevailing narrative that emerges in these comments defines a community that desires to maintain many of the characteristics that have made Edina prosperous in the past, such as a focus on single-family housing, quality schools, and excellent amenities. It is also a community that is concerned with falling behind other neighboring communities either in its perceived image or in its ability to develop new amenities that are more attractive to the young families of tomorrow. Much of the focus here is focused on residential development, with the bulk of respondents framing their comments within the context of the two scenarios – Edina Today – Extended and Reinventing Tradition that stress community character but minimize the role of commercial development.

The development tensions that exist can be summed up in a number of comments. One 51-60 year-old female resident suggests that,

“I want to live in a community where there are many more options than to get in my car in order to move about and run errands. The addition of sidewalks and more places to walk/run in a park like setting is hugely important to me and my family of six. I love the 50th and France area but feel Edina now has to extend these retail/coffee shop options to additional neighborhoods in Edina, such as Cahill and 70th and Valley View and Wooddale. I have walked around Lake Cornelia and Bredesen Park a million times and would like to have other viable 2-4 mile loop options.”

The importance of striking an appropriate balance is mentioned time and again by respondents. Most respondents express at least some willingness to consider change, even if it is less certain as to what that change entails. The need for this balance, as well as a number of other prospective areas of future growth were noted by this 21-30 year-old male resident, who notes that,

“Finding the balance of maintaining the most important aspects of Edina, such as quality education and strong families, while also embracing redevelopment and urban renewal projects such as areas of higher density living such as the many multi-family projects around Southdale is important. I am personally excited about the prospects of the Pentagon Park redevelopment will bring to Edina's tax base.”

Many of the comments that are most similar to these also note that development diversity is necessary to remove some of the fiscal strain on the residential tax base. Again, a prevalent theme in this feedback is the importance of providing the means for young families to access the community.

The role that Edina plays within the broader Twin Cities region was also mentioned on a number of occasions as one of the preferred priorities in the scenario outcomes. One respondent writes,

“I would like to see Edina become more connected to our neighboring cities, in terms of transit and in terms of the age diversity of our population. As the mayor has said, we are part of a region. Just as we are not physically an island, we should not act as though our community is an island, walled off from the surrounding area. That approach will not be a strength for us in the long run. The core issue is



"More sidewalks are not a good thing. I was raised in Edina in a neighborhood without sidewalks and loved it. I now live on a street where the city is contemplating sidewalks and where 90% of residents are opposed to them. Frankly the citizens should be heard on matters like this and not some broad national research."

Longer-term residents of Edina (those over ten years of tenure) appear to be most strongly opposed to sidewalk and bike path development. The strongest base of support for further development is among younger residents (under 30), and those who point to the school district as one of the city's strongest assets. What emerges is a picture of a community that desires greater connectivity in some neighborhoods, but not all, with access to its excellent schools being the main priority.

The same general picture emerges when considering the role of development more broadly. The redevelopment of France Avenue is generally regarded as the example upon which future projects should be based. Southdale Mall and Pentagon Park are also identified as the two strongest targets for future commercial development. There is less certainty about the redevelopment of the Grandview Mall, or the Fred Richards golf course, though respondents were generally aware of ongoing conversations regarding these properties. Respondents are moderately supportive of new commercial development, but desire projects that are modest in scale and those that are compatible with a residential focus on single-family housing. This again is a theme that will be repeated throughout the following categorical questions.

The word cloud presented at right again summarizes the sentiment of these comments.





5.2 CATEGORICAL PREFERENCES

The Future Scenarios Survey instrument was designed to measure respondents' preferences both in terms of plausible scenario outcomes as well as a number of categorical statements related to the key driver axes of "Balancing Edina's Redevelopment" and "Community Fabric and Character." Each of the questions that follow was arrayed on a 10-point Likert scale, with respondents identifying their preference along a continuum anchored by two end points. The end point statements correspond to characteristics identified through the Vision Edina Think Tank workshops.

Respondents were asked a series of eight categorical questions, with four each corresponding to the two driver axes. In a general sense, the questions and the scale are exploring appetite and sensitivity to change. The left hand point (1 on the scale), largely represents the status quo or no change, and the right hand point (10 on the scale) represents maximum change in the continuum and question presented. The distribution of responses to each of these questions is presented as follows.

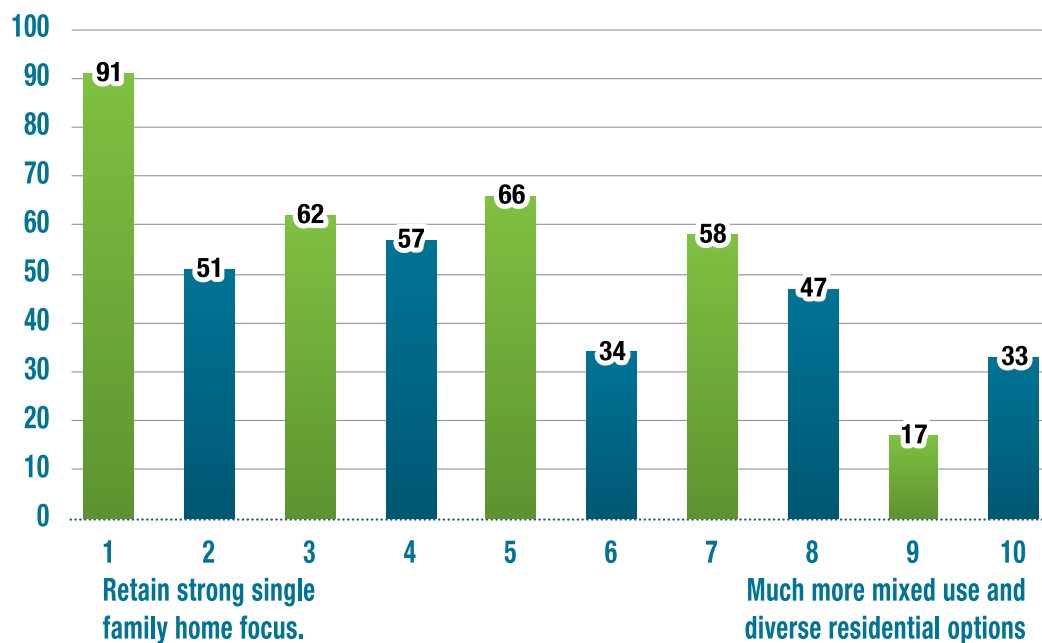
5.2.1 PERSPECTIVES ON REDEVELOPMENT

The first set of categorical questions asked respondents to consider their ideal development mix in terms of residential development, transportation options, commercial development, and employment availability. Each of these issues was identified as critical drivers by the Think Tank participants and is closely related to each of the scenario spaces. The response to each of these questions largely confirms the theme of moderation that has defined the analysis to this point.



5.2.1.1 Residential Development Mix

In terms of residential property type and density, how would you like Edina to be 20 years in the future?



The first development-related question asked respondents to identify their ideal residential development mix. The prevailing consensus suggests community support for policies and practices which emphasize the preservation of the existing single-family residential focus. Some mixed-use or higher-density options such as apartments or condominiums may be supported, but not at the cost of the community's reputation for high-value quality housing.

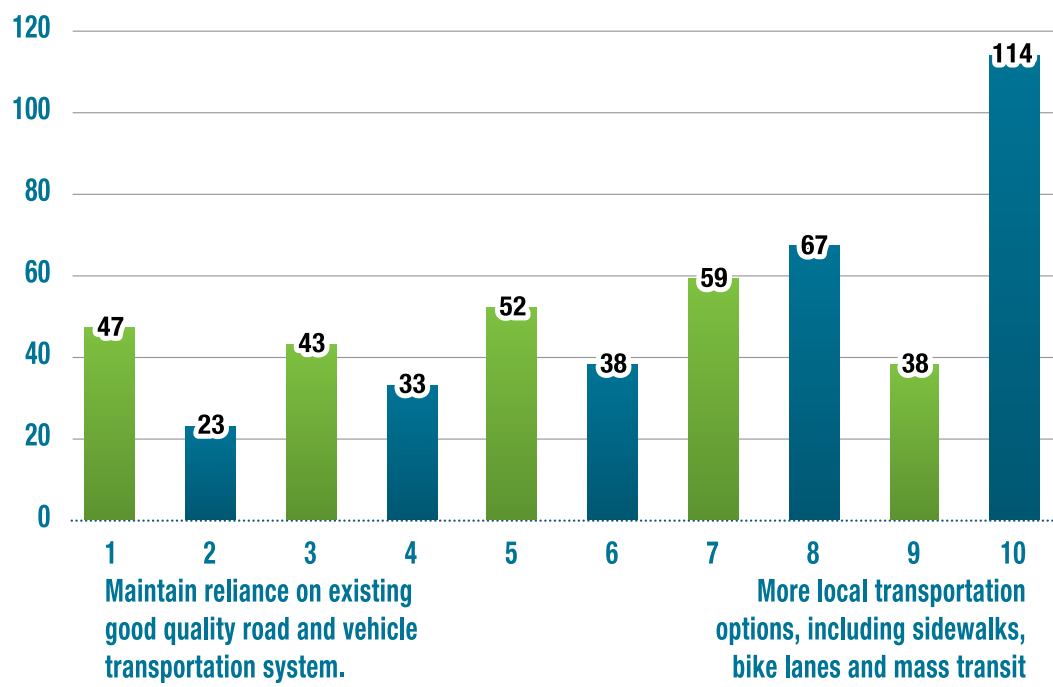
Differences in opinion exist between men and women and younger and older residents in this regard. Women are far more likely to support a more diverse housing mix than their male counterparts. Similarly, younger residents (those under 30) and older residents (those over 60) were equal in their support of more housing options, while middle-aged respondents favored a single-family focus. This seems logical given that residents in each of these age groups is far more likely to utilize multi-unit housing options, either as a first home or in retirement. This represents a rare point of agreement between respondents in these groups.

Comments on this question flesh out the general consensus to some degree. The majority (56.1 percent or 226 of 403 comments) of respondents who referred to some aspect of housing emphasized the need for a consistent focus on single-family housing. A strong preference is clearly voiced to maintain a housing mix that caters to families and maintains the current level of prestige enjoyed by residents.



5.2.1.2 Transportation Options

In terms of ease of access, walkability and local transportation issues, how would you like Edina to be 20 years in the future?



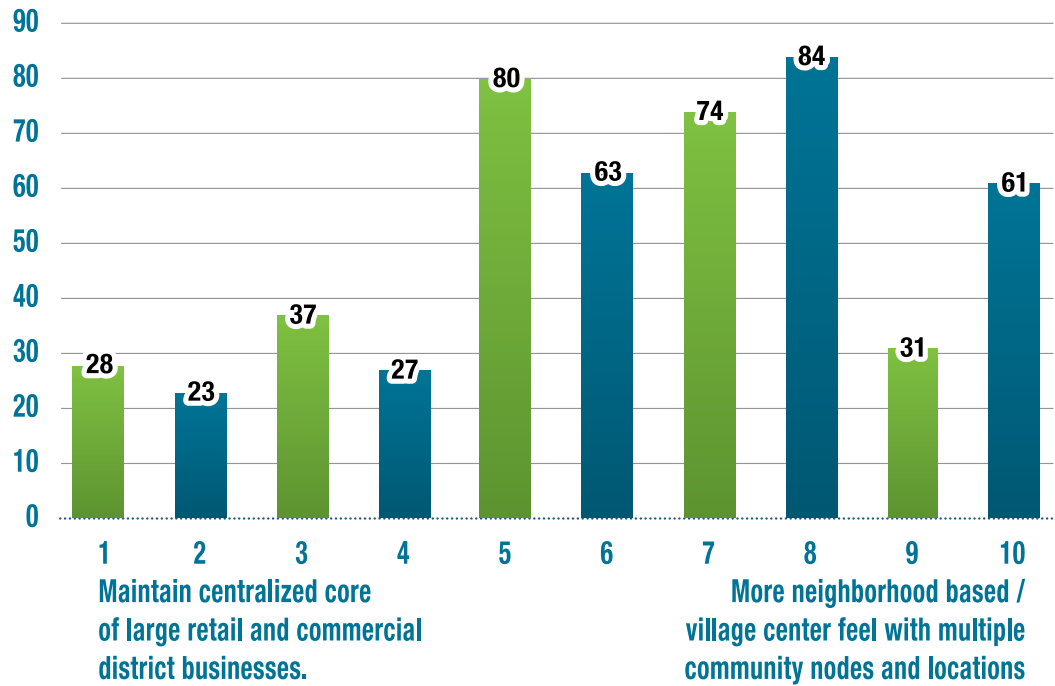
When asked to reveal their preferences regarding transportation options, a clear majority of respondents prefer more options over fewer. However, this support is qualified. Many of the comments offered in response to this question point to support for more walkability and biking options in the city in the form of sidewalks and bike trails. Support for bike lanes and mass transit are much more limited. As such, the transportation mix preferred by respondents allows for multiple modes, but prefers those modes to be separated from each other.

Interestingly, support for a more diverse transportation mix is nearly universal across all subgroups. There is some moderation of support among residents of the Northwest part of the city, but support in general follows the pattern demonstrated above. Support is highest among non-residents of the city, which again is logical as these respondents more frequently commute into the city for a variety of reasons.



5.2.1.3 Commercial Development Mix

In terms of the local economy and commercial districts, how would you like Edina to be 20 years in the future?



The respondents' preferences regarding commercial development may appear to differ from their residential preferences, but in many ways the two findings are consistent. A majority of respondents support the development of at least some measure of additional commercial properties. However, they prefer that these developments are smaller in scale and are integrated into the character of existing neighborhoods. The retail pockets along France Avenue were widely cited as possible examples. Similarly, respondents also identified the Grandview and Pentagon Circle areas as possible commercial development opportunities. In general, respondents prefer convenient access to retail and other services, but again wish to keep these separate from their residential neighborhoods.

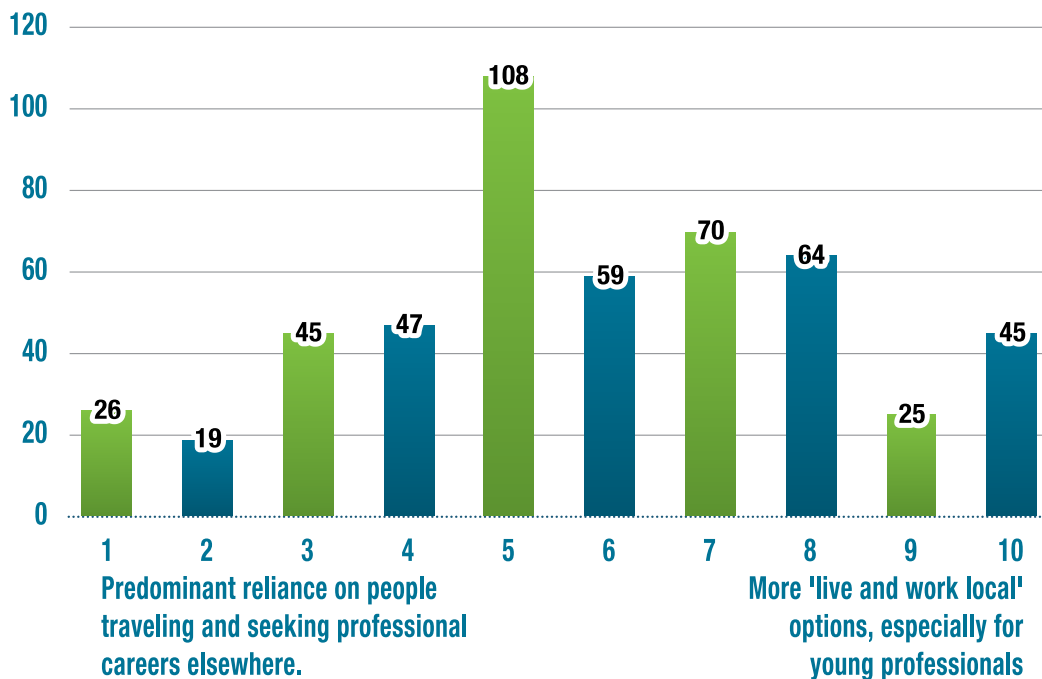
Support for the development mix described above is strongest among the older respondents in the survey sample. Younger residents generally supported more large-scale developments, suggesting that they were more acclimated to the shopping mall culture that dominates the Southdale area of the city. Many of these same respondents also voiced concern for the future and ongoing viability of this corridor.

The comments offered in reaction to this question offer a more nuanced perspective on the issue of commercial development specifically, and a redevelopment philosophy more broadly. The concept of neighborhoods was raised in a number of occasions with most of the respondents supportive of strong neighborhood identities. What is equally clear is that the consensus view of neighborhoods does not include any possible space for national or regional chain commercial development. Small businesses may be supported, but only those that provide



5.2.1.4 Live and Work

Today, many people in Edina commute to work outside the city boundaries. In terms of employment and work locations, how would you like Edina to be 20 years in the future?



When asked about their preferred employment mix, respondents again support a moderated position that leans slightly towards embracing change. There is support for the development of more live/work options that are targeted towards young professionals. Young respondents, who generally recognize that the employment options available within the city do not support homeownership there, especially supported this position. Support for the mix described here is also strongly correlated with support for more mixed-use and higher-density residential development and transportation options.

The narrative that is developing in these results is that its younger residents view the City of Edina as an aspirational destination. They largely recognize that it may not be possible for them to be considered lifelong residents of the city in the same way as their parents or grandparents, but they view the city as a place where they wish to return. And in doing so, they envision a future that balances those characteristics that make this possible as well as maintaining those aspects of the city they wish to return to.

Commenters in this area are again torn as to what constitutes the ideal development mix. Respondents were generally quick to conclude that the mix of employment opportunities currently available within the city does not mesh well with either housing costs or availability. As such, the question of what Edina may be able to do to attract more young professionals shares many of the same characteristics as a “chicken and egg” argument. Respondents

believe that the city could be somewhat successful in attracting more high-income industries and professions. However, this is not necessarily viewed as a priority. This sentiment is characterized in the following,

"I think the location of Edinā is already precisely what draws people to live here. It is an easy commute to many locations and already offers many employment opportunities within the city. Again, people who choose the suburb is because they want to feel like they can escape work when at home. Most people who want to live and work in the same place will choose an urban setting. Most people don't elect to settle in an urban setting, because they tire of it and want to move out of it, to the suburban setting. We don't need more of the same that every other city is doing. We need to remain exceptional by being different and preserve what people appreciate about the suburban setting."

The prominent location of Edina within the Twin Cities and within close proximity to Minneapolis largely integrates the city's workforce into a regional employment market. This changes the perspective of residents as to the definition of "work/life." A daily commute of twenty minutes is largely viewed as acceptable. This frees the city to focus its development vision on meeting the needs of the "life" half of this equation, a sentiment favored by the majority of commenters.

A second underlying paradox exists within the feedback received on this issue. Respondents have consistently voiced support for a community that strongly fosters families. These same respondents recognize that many of the amenities preferred by young families may not be shared by other young professionals. Respondents also recognize that Edina will likely have to increasingly compete for new residents with other neighboring communities. This is especially true of young professionals, as this commenter offers, "I believe younger professionals work outside Edina because of their jobs. The money to allow you to live in Edina also decreases your need of Edina. We need to consider how to draw increased professional networks to Edina - possibly building on our medical and educational base."

The word cloud presented at right generally supports this perspective.



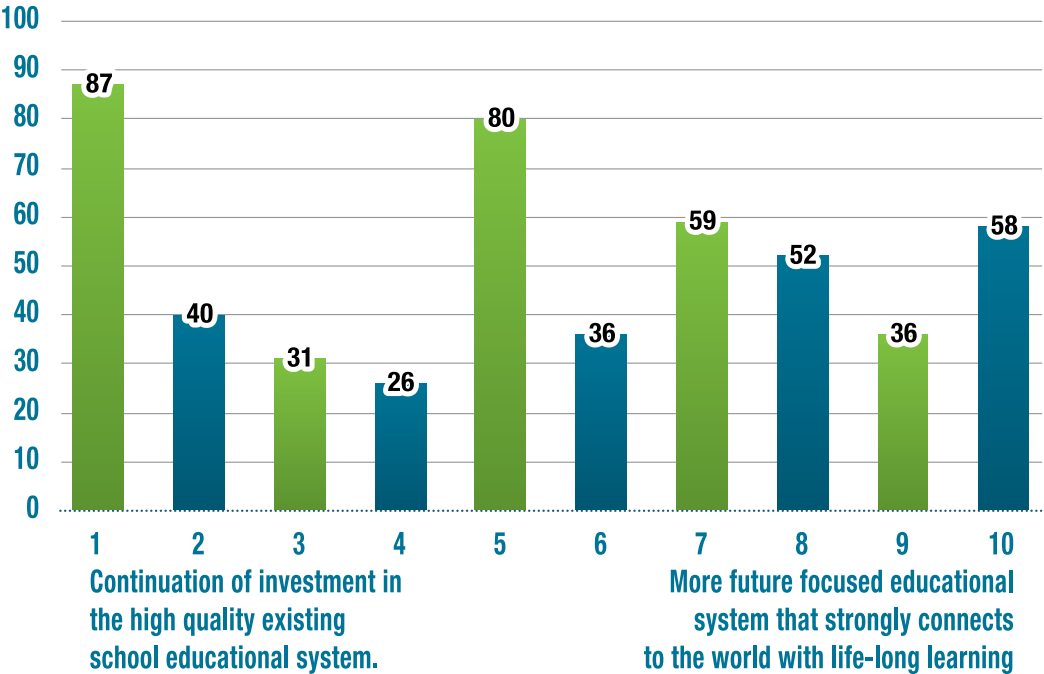


5.2.2 PERSPECTIVES ON COMMUNITY FABRIC AND CHARACTER

The survey next asked respondents to consider a series of four categorical questions regarding aspects of the community’s social fabric and character. This includes perspectives on the role of education, the demographic mix of the community, environmental stewardship, and the position of Edina within the broader Twin Cities region. Where many of the redevelopment-related questions were both tangible and practical, the tenor of the questions here may be viewed as more aspirational. As such, we see a consensus that leans more strongly towards those statements that imply the greatest degree of change.

5.2.2.1 Education

Educational quality has been a highly valued aspect of Edina. In terms of the future orientation of education, how would you like Edina to be 20 years in the future?



The first categorical question on Edina’s community fabric and character proves to be the most difficult to analyze. The results presented above show a concentration of support for both continuing existing investments and shifting to the future of the city’s education system. Some the respondents suggested that the wording of this question and the endpoints were especially problematic and contributed to the widespread distribution of perspectives here.

One clear message can be taken from the respondent perspectives. Investment in quality education and support for a future-focused curriculum are not mutually exclusive. Rather, they are viewed as two important pillars in education policy. Similarly, many respondents pointed to Edina Public Schools as one of the treasures of the community. While any additional investments in the system may point to the future, few respondents would be willing to sacrifice even some small share of the system’s quality.

One commenter exemplified the dichotomy that pervades the lack of consensus on this issue accordingly, “I think it is important that we try and escape the Edina “bubble” by relating student learning to the outside in the school system. We can do this while still maintaining a high quality education system.” Neither of the options offered at the endpoints in this continuum are viewed as mutually exclusive. As such, the vast majority of commenters support options that instill more outward and lifelong learning perspectives while maintaining the current quality of the system.

Finally, one other undercurrent was clear in feedback to this issue as it has persisted through many of the other topics explored in this analysis. Respondents again expressed some concern as to the impact that efforts to attract new residents to the city may have on the existing quality of the education system. It appears that respondents assume that a certain degree of tradeoff is inevitable in this, as suggested by the following comment,

important
global
future
need
think
current
needs
community
quality
change
focus
world
life
now
will
what
and
very
district
kids
want
options
better
you
that
strong
great
keep
can
they
all
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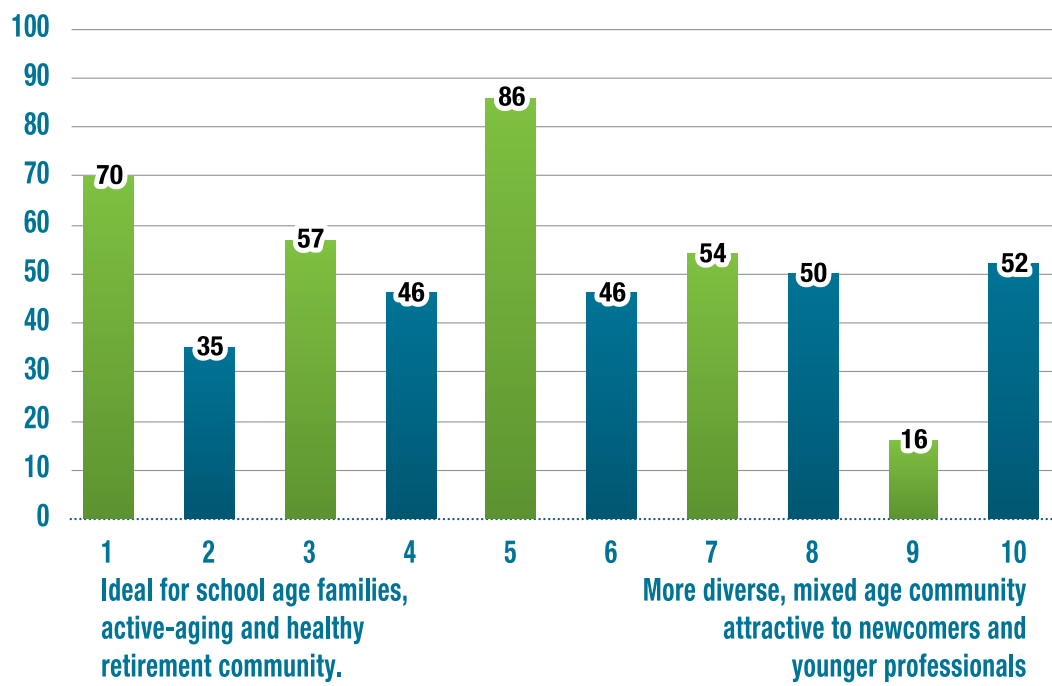
Education
School
System
Learning
Future
Quality
Community
Important
Global
Need
Think
Current
Needs
Change
Focus
World
Life
Now
Will
What
And
Very
District
Kids
Want
Options
Better
You
That
Strong
Great
Keep
Can
They
All
Way
Has
Why
Should
This
With
Are
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But
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Or
Educational
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Learn
Lifelong
Still
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One
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Technology
Focused
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City of Edina, MN, January 2015



5.2.2.2 Population Mix

The population of Edina is aging and is a relatively homogeneous middle-class community. In terms of the future population mix and demographics, how would you like Edina to be 20 years in the future?



The distribution of responses regarding preferences for Edina’s population mix closely mirrors that of its perspectives on education quality and focus. The majority of responses here tend to center around the midpoint suggesting that the majority of respondents prefer a balanced mix. This again points back to the aspirational character of the city as a destination community. This reputation, coupled with the quality of life provided by its educational system and other amenities will serve as an inducement for new residents to move into the city. There appears to be little appetite for an active attraction strategy in this regard.

There is a sharp generational divide in this regard, with younger residents aligning more strongly to the right of the midpoint, and older residents identifying with more leftward positions. This can be accounted for, to some regard, by the wording of the respective endpoint statements. It is also consistent with differences in support for diverse housing and employment options. This further reinforces the aspirational narrative that was previously suggested.

The issue of population diversity assumed two different principal forms in the comments received in response to this question. Respondents generally agreed that the city’s population-age mix is relatively balanced. However, concerns about the level of services offered to Edina’s aging population once again became evident here. Many of the older respondents who provided feedback to this question made some allusion to a desire to “retire in place,” and believe that Edina offers this possibility. This perspective was shared by the 61-70 year-old female respondent



who offered, "I think a more diverse, mixed age community IS ideal for school-age families and active aging. We should never expect that people will want to live in four cities as they grow from single to parents to empty-nest to retired."

A second, related theme evident in these comments relates to the extent to what is considered "young" in Edina. This 41-50 year-old female resident asked the following questions, "What are the assumptions underlying the question? The community is attractive to newcomers now. The 30-year-old professionals who move here once married and to raise a family consider themselves to be young. How much younger are we looking to attract as a special demographic? Our under 18 population is slightly higher than our over 65." This perspective, which was shared by many respondents, suggests that the city is already successful in attracting families to the city and that demographic trends suggesting that adults marry later and have children at an older age may work to the city's benefit.

The second form of population diversity addressed in comments is ethnic or racial diversity. Most respondents recognize that this is not generally perceived as an issue locally, but it is unclear whether this is held positively or negatively. A small number of commenters attached concerns about socioeconomic standards and housing values to population diversity, but this represents a distinct minority. Rather the consensus view regarding efforts to diversify the city's population is summed up in the following comment, "The younger families I see at school already seem really diverse. I think this is happening on its own, with no need of the town trying to figure out how to facilitate it. I think people of all types will inevitably move here for the great schools (as long as we maintain the great schools!)." From this perspective, the high quality amenities and services available within the city should be attractive to any family. This city's population is again perceived as being fairly accepting of increased diversity, but feels little desire to actively attract it.

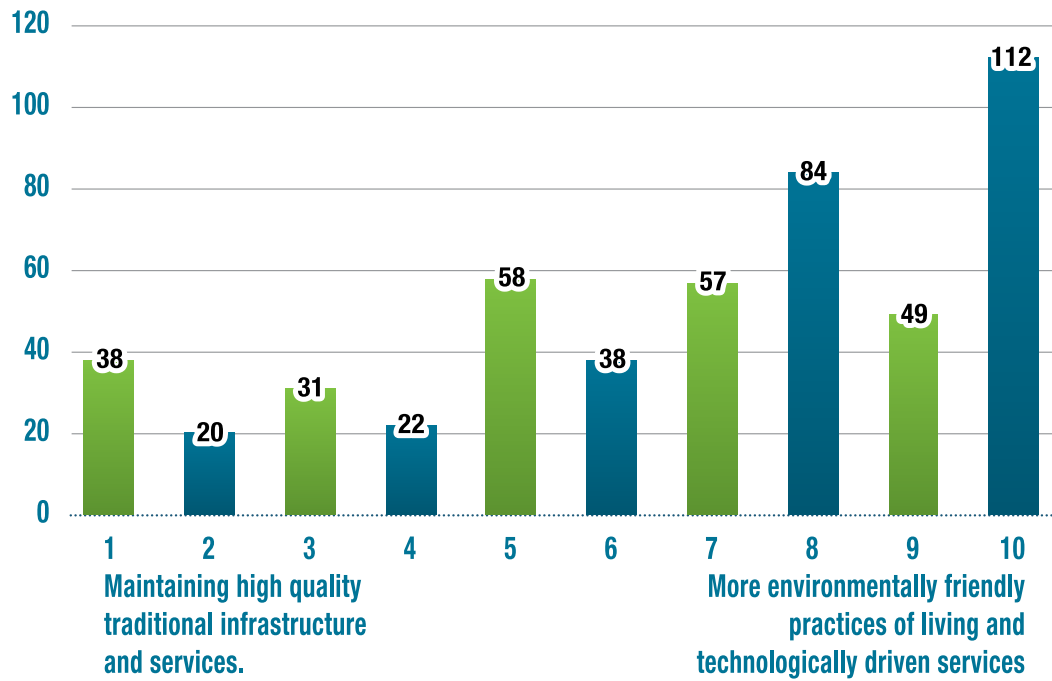
The word cloud presented at right supports the perspectives on diversity presented here.





5.2.2.3 Environmental Stewardship

Technology and environmental awareness is changing the way houses can be built and how people can live in cities. In terms of environmental issues how would you like Edina to be 20 years in the future?



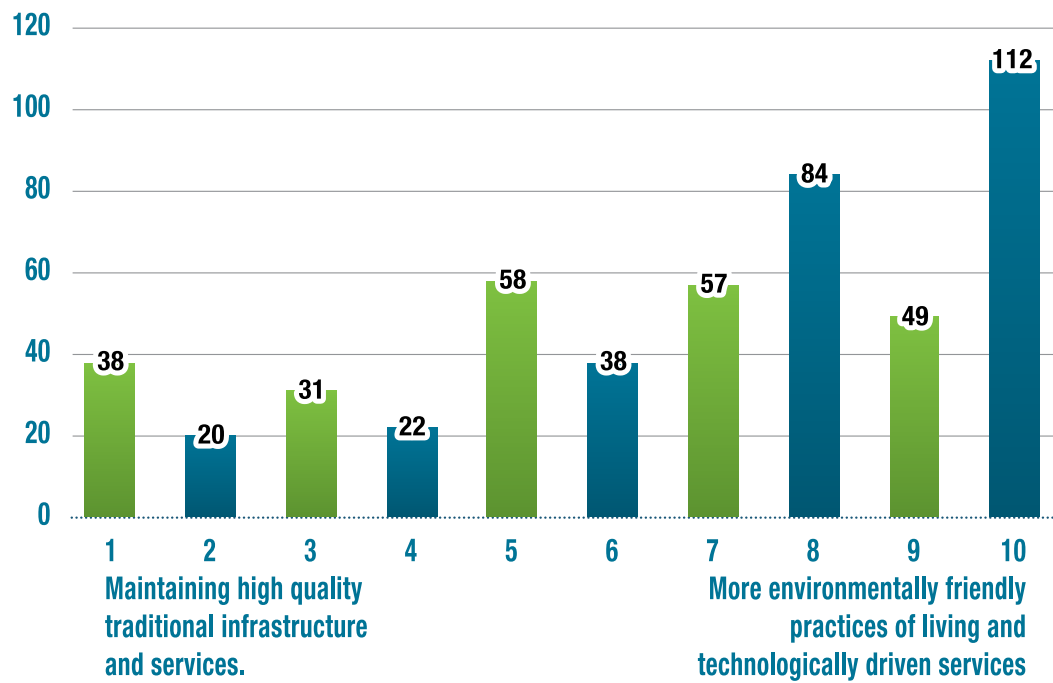
The third question related to the community fabric and character of Edina asked survey respondents to consider the extent they wished the community to consider environmentally-friendly practices in making future development decisions. Not surprisingly, the majority of respondents strongly support environmentally-sensitive development practices. Responses here again highly correlate with support for increased transportation options, as well as multi-family residential development. This contributes to a development perspective that embraces small-scale development as opposed to large-scale growth which may not be environmentally-sustainable. Comments in this area also point to monitoring the level of residential teardowns in the community, as well as the preservation of existing green spaces.

Environmental stewardship in this regard is considered a quality of life issue. Respondents believe that the City has the opportunity to assume a leading position in this regard and point to a number of existing initiatives already underway. Similarly, support is highest among younger residents who are viewed as critical to the future viability of the community. Sustainable environmental policies are also considered part of the narrative that will attract new residents to the city.



5.2.2.4 Regional Leadership

Edina has been a successful inner-ring suburban city for soe decades, with well established character and sense of community. In terms of the future orientation and character, how would you like Edina to be 20 years in the future?



The final categorical question asked of respondents to the Future Scenarios Survey concerned the role of Edina within the broader Twin Cities region. Many of the workshop participants and survey respondents suggested that the city had assumed a leadership role in the past, but that other communities may have assumed this position in more recent years. There is some disagreement as to whether this position was ceded voluntarily, but it is commonly recognized that the community has the potential to regain its standing.

The responses to this question again support the aspirational character consistent throughout many of the previous questions. The community is proud of its heritage, character, and high quality of life. The respondents believe that it is the combination of these values that enhance the community's stature in the region. Further, any movement towards assuming a greater role of regional leadership should look towards the future in innovating new ideas rather than following other's lead. These ideas are not mutually exclusive. Rather, respondents prefer that the new be built upon the foundation of what has made the city the vibrant and prosperous community that it is.

Comments here again represent a clear dichotomy between tradition and innovation. Many respondents found a balance in suggesting, for example that "The "tradition" of Edina IS innovation. Southdale, 50th and France, and Centennial Lakes were all achieved through a vision, an innovative application of design, and a strong desire to



create a new paradigm. We need to maintain that. That innovation is what will allow Edina to maintain the high quality of life we have today.” This sentiment again reinforces the sense of pride that the majority of respondents feel regarding Edina’s history. Most respondents express the desire in a number of instances to build upon this tradition.

Other commenters point to Edina’s unique position and standing as a clear benefit. “Edina’s proximity to Minneapolis gives it a clear “first-ring” advantage. On the one hand, because of this advantage, taking chances on becoming an innovative regional leader is not necessary. As well, we can’t compete with the lifestyle that Minneapolis can offer. However, we also can’t be completely stagnant when it comes to innovation.” This suggests that regional leadership may be possible within a given context, but that expectations should remain realistic. This sentiment is also closely tied to the aspirational narrative persistent in many of the questions. Edina is viewed as the original premiere suburb in the Twin Cities. So long as many or all of the characteristics that existed in the past persist today, then respondents have no reason to assume that the city will lose its relative standing.

It is this desire to maintain the city’s existing strengths and character that may limit innovation in the future, though another commenter suggests that “Edina should maintain its character, but part of that character could be high quality innovation.” The development of new ideas is again welcomed, though respondents urge caution and consideration, for example “New ideas don’t have to be radical. They can offer a healthier lifestyle which can lead to even more community pride.” Respondents are receptive to change in many forms, but are also quite adamant that Edina cannot forget what it has always been.

In many ways, what is represented in the comments on this and other questions in the Future Scenarios Survey is the extension of a conversation as to what Edina is and what its residents wish it to be. They provide a great deal of context to other findings shared here and help to shape the eventual consensus that will hopefully form through the Vision Edina process. These are important conversations that the most progressive and advanced communities both foster and incorporate into their planning efforts.

A final word cloud again provides some additional context as to the nature of these comments.





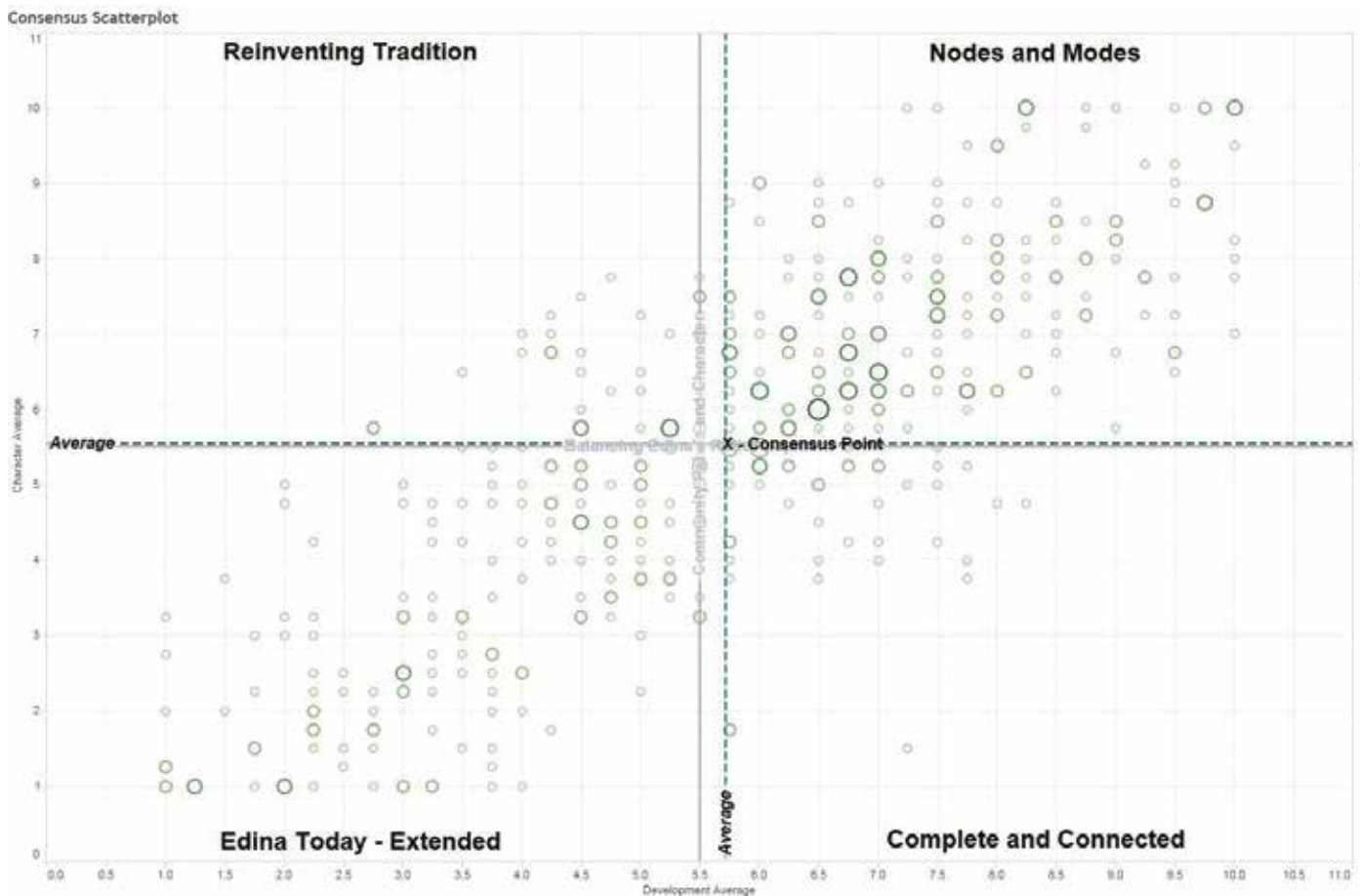
6.0 DEFINING A FUTURE CONSENSUS

An emerging consensus narrative of strong traditional values bolstered by future growth has developed in the course of the responses to the Future Scenarios Survey. However, it has not yet been made clear as to where the combination of these preferences placed the consensus position within the scenario space developed at the Vision Edina Think Tank Workshop. Assessments of each of the plausible scenario outcomes yielded a level of support for each, but no overwhelming sentiment in favor of any of the four. As such, we must look at additional means of defining consensus in this regard.

The specification of the categorical questions is especially valuable in this regard as they provide us with a series of ten-point scaled responses to each of the eight questions asked. This data set further divides into two four-question subgroups, which align with each of the key driver axes of “Balancing Edina’s Redevelopment” and “Community Fabric and Character.” This allows us to develop a means by which to place each respondent’s individual preference within the survey space.

Each respondent’s responses to the categorical question subsets were subjected to a weighted averaging process that took into account the total number of questions answered as not all respondents answered each of the eight questions. The weighted average of the first four questions provides us with a horizontal, or x-axis value along the “Balancing Edina’s Redevelopment” driver axis, and the same value for the final four questions provides us with a vertical, or y-axis value along the “Community Fabric and Character” driver axis. The combination of these two coordinates allows us to place each individual respondent within the two-dimensional scenario space. The scatterplot presented below illustrates this process.

6.1 GENERAL CONSENSUS POINTS



You will note the presence of a number of differently sized circles on the plot. These represent points where a number of respondents reported the same values and range in size from one to three respondents. Further, you will note the presence of two dotted lines and a bolded “Consensus Point.” These depict the average of all of the weighted coordinate values, as well as the intersection of these values. This identifies the point of greatest agreement among the respondents and is well within the 95th percentile confidence interval of a normal distribution of all values.

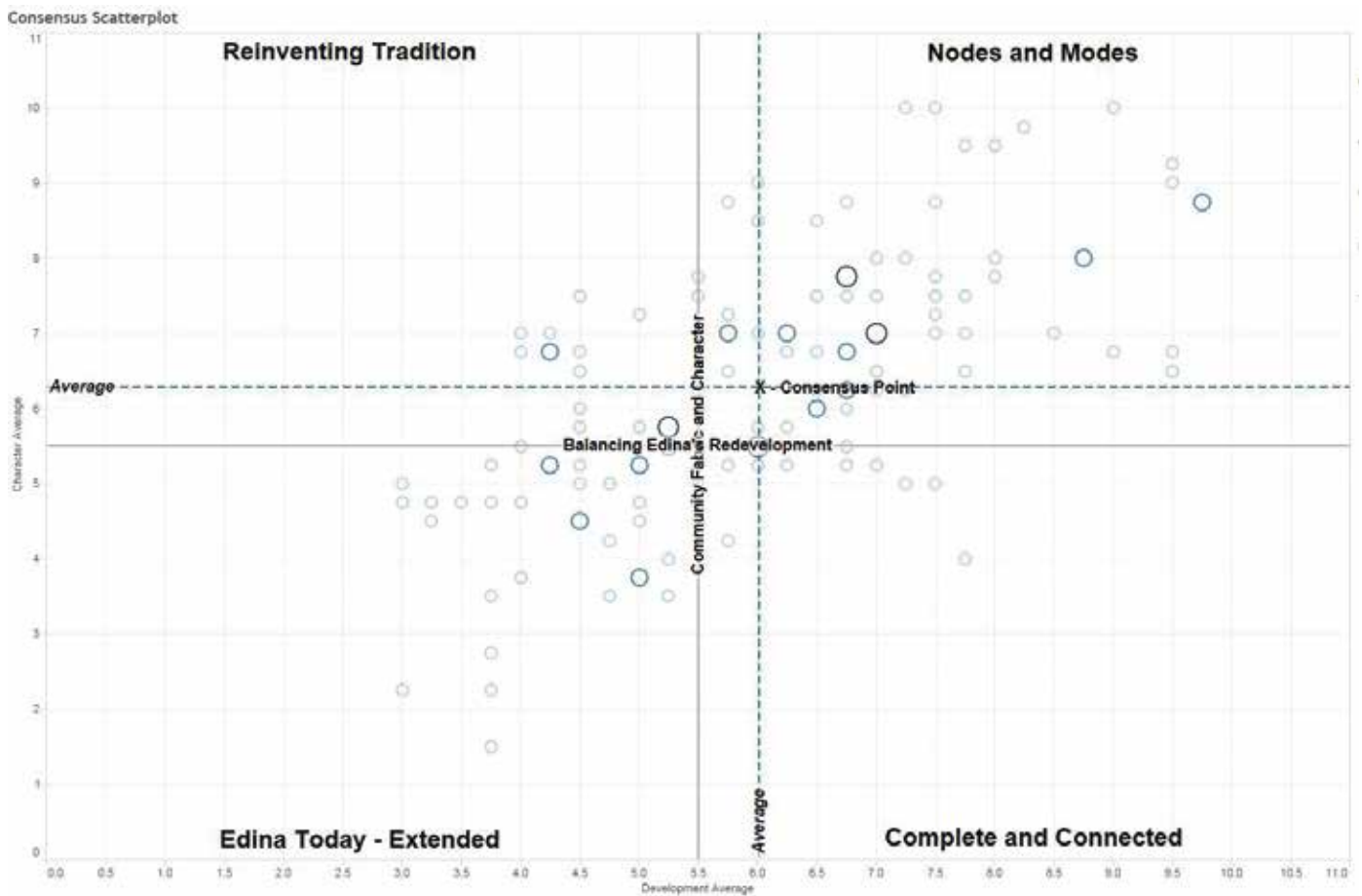
It is interesting to note that the consensus point falls nearly directly in line with the midpoint of the “Community Fabric and Character” axis but is slightly to the left of the midpoint of the “Balancing Edina’s Redevelopment” axis. This does not specifically align with any of the four scenario spaces, but does fall between the “Complete and Connected” and “Nodes and Modes” scenario outcomes. This may appear to contradict the preferred likelihood curves previously described, but is consistent with the narrative developed through the categorical analysis.



What emerges through the consensus analysis is the image of a community that has embraced change to some considerable extent, yet wishes to maintain its traditional character. This is particularly true in the area of residential development and investments in the education system. It is believed that the strength of the community will continue to attract families in the future, thus preserving its current population mix and high quality of life.

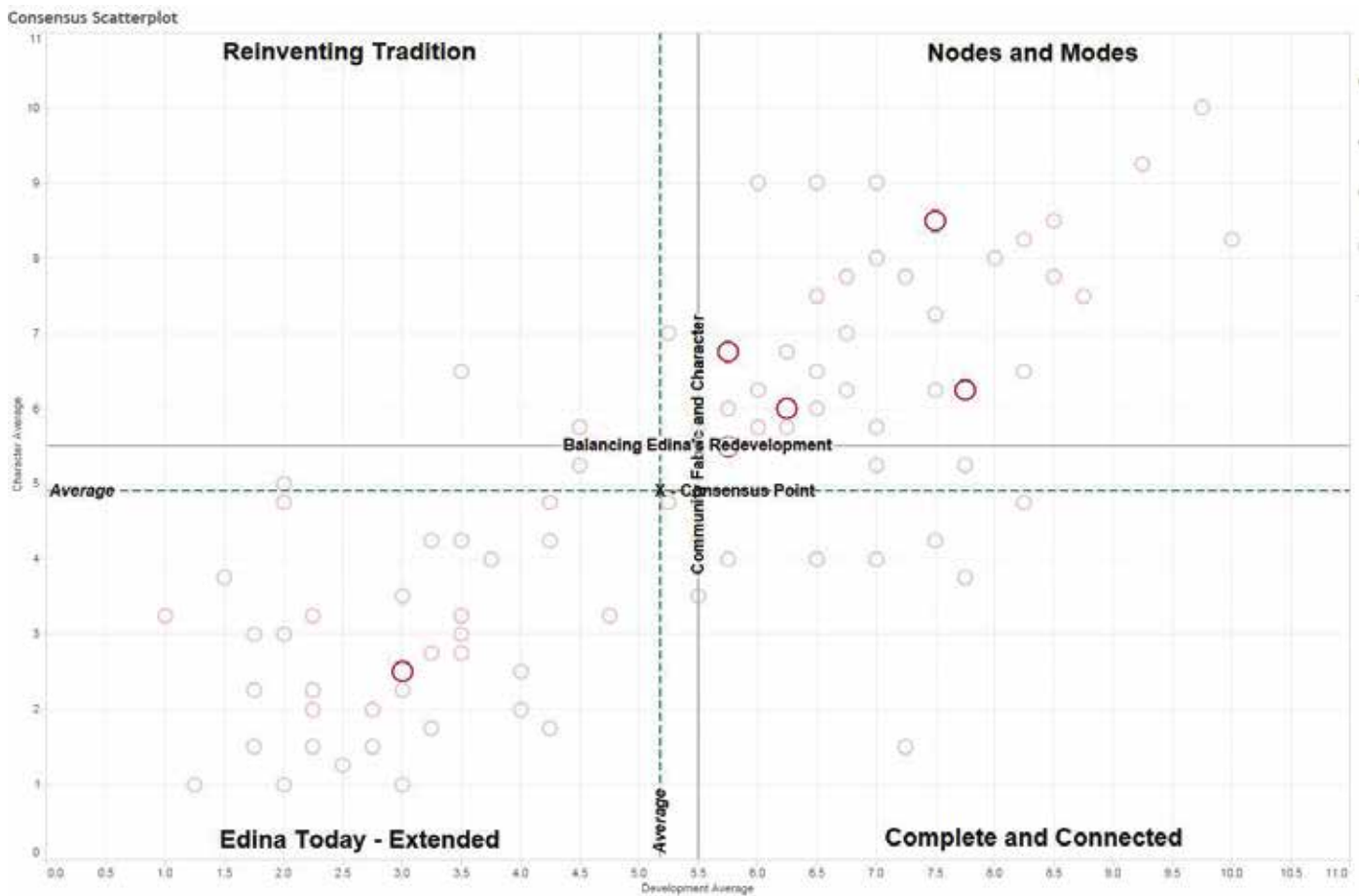
There are a number of areas in which this consensus point diverges, however. Nowhere is this more apparent than in comparing the perspectives of the two largest respondent groups by age – those aged 10 to 20 and those aged 51 to 60.

6.1.1 CONSENSUS POINT OF 10 TO 20 YEAR-OLDS



The consensus point defined by the responses of the youngest cohort in the survey is once again relatively close to the midpoint of both axes, but is more firmly grounded in the “Nodes and Modes” scenario space. This suggests that this group is more receptive to change in both dimensions, though is not willing to fully embrace the more future-focused vision presented in the scenario description.

6.1.2 CONSENSUS POINT OF 51 TO 60 YEAR-OLDS



This perspective is sharply contrasted by the consensus associated with the 51 to 60 age cohort as depicted above. We see that the consensus point arrived at by this group is also closely tied to the midpoint of both axes, but it is rooted in the “Edina Today – Extended” scenario space. This again suggests the willingness to embrace change in both the development mix and community character, but not to the extent of their younger counterparts. Neither of these outcomes is necessarily surprising and is confirmed by each of the previous results. Rather, what this suggests is the presence of a defined conversation space around a willingness to change within the public discourse.



6.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF CONSENSUS

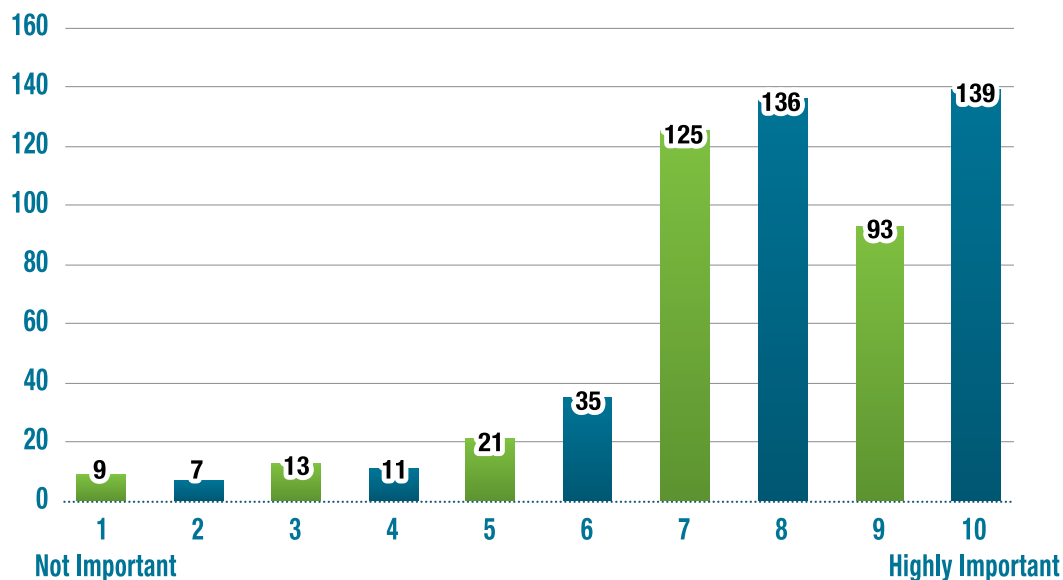
The initial inclination of most observers when presented with the consensus points above is to conclude that the respondents and citizens engaged in the Vision Edina process have little appetite for change. This, however, would neglect two rather important aspects of the interpretation of these findings. First, it is important to note that the spread of respondent positions in any of the scatterplots presented above rests on a diagonally-aligned 1 to 10 point scale. Therefore, the distance from the null, or no change position at the bottom left-hand corner of the chart to the consensus point both for all respondents and any subgroup represents a significant degree of difference from the status quo. This suggests that respondents generally agree that some degree of change is needed in the community to meet its future vision. The difference between consensus points further suggests that there is some disagreement both as to the amount of change needed. This provides an appropriate discussion space to engage in a community dialogue on vision and stated goals.

Second, the survey results presented in previous sections indicated that there are a number of areas where participants in this process agree. Respondents generally prefer a housing policy that prioritizes the maintenance of a strong single-family inventory while exploring the development of more multi-family options. There is also agreement favoring the development of more transportation options, including biking and walking trails. Respondents are also strongly in agreement that Edina should assume a leadership role in promoting environmentally-sustainable policies and practices. There is an element of change inherent in each of these issue areas. More than anything, the survey process has identified a core group of citizens who both represent the perspectives of the broader community and have an appetite to engage in a collective visioning and planning process.



7.0 IMPORTANCE OF VISION AND PERCEIVED VALUE

The questions included in the Future Scenarios Survey begin with two priming questions asking respondents to rate the importance both of a shared vision for the City of Edina, and the role of that vision in decision making. The inclusion of questions of this nature is common in participatory feedback frameworks as it allows us to measure the commitment of respondents to the process and its outcomes. Responses to questions of this nature are also highly susceptible to selection bias as it could be argued that every respondent demonstrates some level of commitment in choosing to complete the survey. While this is true, we also know that this commitment varied as only 83 percent of respondents answered each of the nineteen questions included in the survey instrument.



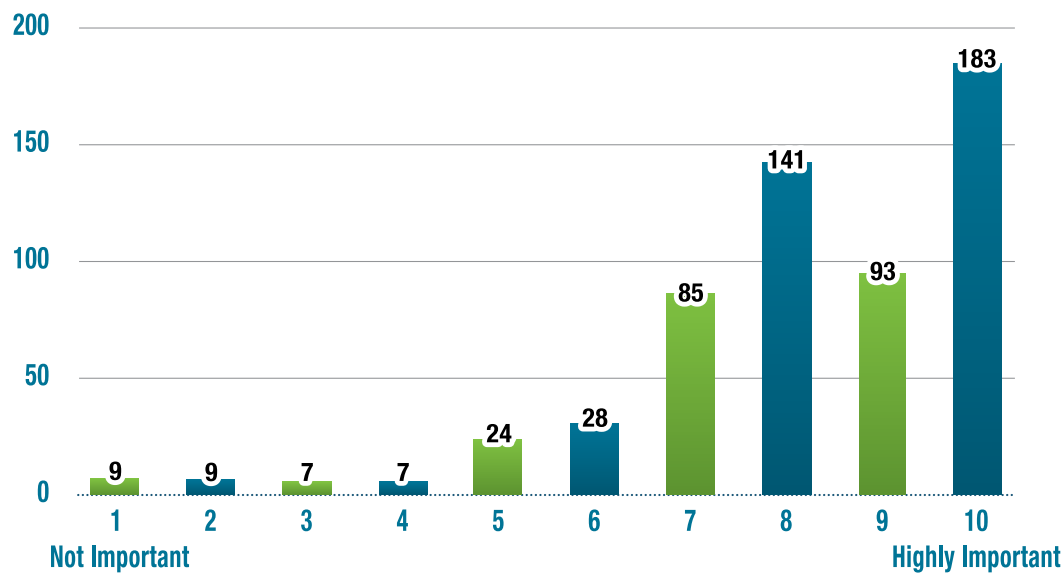
7.1 IMPORTANCE OF A SHARED VISION

Eighty-four percent of respondents believe that having a shared vision is either important or highly important for the future of the City of Edina. Similarly, 85.6 percent of respondents believe that this shared vision is important to consider when making decisions that impact the community at large. There is little disagreement among various sub-groups on either of these questions. There is some possibility that these results are biased by the willingness of respondents to engage in the Vision Edina process. However, it is also important to remember both the formation and implementation of a shared vision are heavily dependent on the efforts of a group of core supporters.



7.3 DESIRE FOR COLLABORATIVE DECISION MAKING

How important is it to consider the shared vision when **MAKING DECISIONS** for the community?

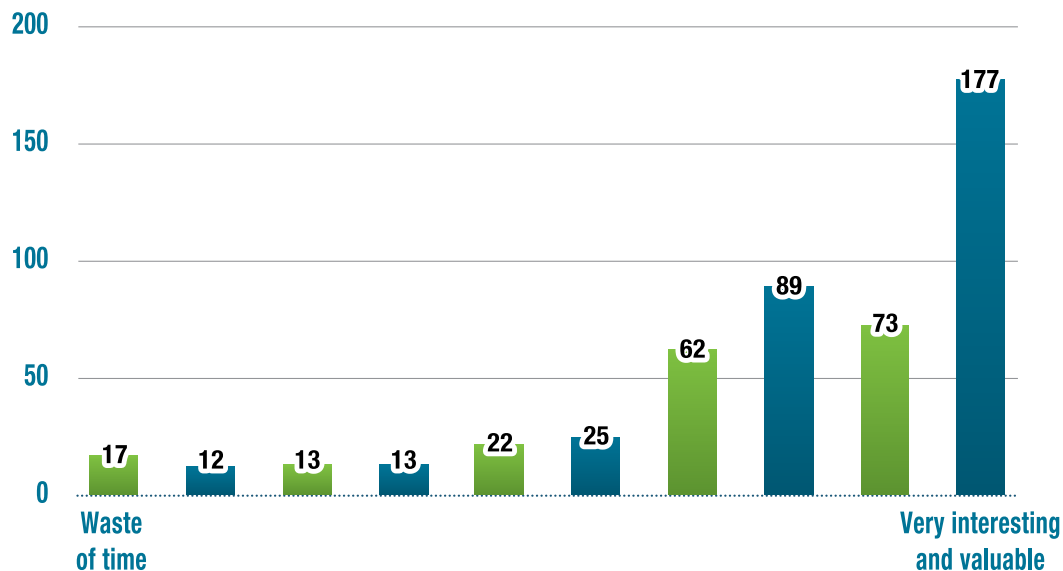


The distribution of responses presented here shows a clear preference for collaborative processes in making key decisions affecting the community. This desire typically plays out in communities through a variety of means ranging from community listening sessions to a formal advisory board structure. While it is unclear as to the extent to which citizens would be likely to engage in such processes in the future, a large majority believes that the Vision Edina process and its outcome is a clear step in the right direction.



7.4 PERCEIVED VALUE OF THE VISION EDINA PROCESS

Do you think this future planning and visioning process is an interesting and valuable exercise for the City of Edina and its residents?



The final question respondents were asked to answer assessed their perspective on the value of the Vision Edina process, as a whole. Again, the wide majority of respondents answered favorably. This is not surprising given the potential for participation bias discussed earlier. However, this again points to the presence of a highly engaged and interested group of residents in the community. These residents feel that their opinions are valued and have therefore offered their insights through this process. The high level of perceived value also provides some degree of optimism for engagement in future aspects of the initiative and the related comprehensive planning process.

Feedback on this question also produced the following word cloud, which reinforces the desire for change and engagement present in the community.





8.0 FUTURE VISION IMPLICATIONS

The Vision Edina surveys, and the discussion held at the various community workshops, reveal a number of important issues for consideration. The Vision Edina process is a process that extends beyond the mere creation of a vision statement, and it is designed to provide the 'once in a decade' deep dive into future thinking. In this way, it is an ideal opportunity to examine the current positioning of the community, and to begin considering what are the issues that will define future relevant, competitiveness and success.

The data analysis and community dialogue have revealed a number of important areas that have implications of the future evolution and progress of the City. Some of these issues include:

8.1 EDINA “BUBBLE” EFFECT

There has been some considerable discussion in surveys and workshops about the Edina ‘bubble’. This implies that the City has been able to remain relatively insulated from externalities, especially those viewed as undesirable. The citizens have created, over time, an enviable reputation and an ideal ‘incubator’ environment in which to raise families. There is pride in the multi-generational connection and the tendency for people to move to Edina and never leave. Within the context of the broader 4.5 million-person Twin City metropolises, Edina boasts low crime, stable governance and an attractive social isolation. The only significant outside interferences that were repeatedly discussed were the air traffic from Minneapolis St Paul International Airport (MSP), and the developmental pressures being driven by the Twin cities Metropolitan Council which is indicating greater population density within inner ring Cities.

However, this may inadvertently create some complacency. Some areas to address may include:

- Greater understanding of how growth pressures in the surrounding region will spill over into Edina.
- Whether the focus on maintaining existing strengths has limited the pursuit of other opportunities or adoption of best practices.
- Consideration of how this perceived effect is viewed outside of the community and whether it creates an exclusionary disincentive to young families interested in moving to the City.
- While there is a clear desire for Edina to assume a greater regional leadership role, this perception may limit this ability.

8.2 APPETITE FOR CHANGE

The scatter plot and the category data in the survey results presented here show that there is in fact a significant appetite for change within the community. This includes:

- A clear recognition of the role of community input in the visioning process.
- The distribution of responses around the consensus point occurs in a space defined along a continuum ranging from no change to a maximum level of change. The location of the consensus point falls close to the median of this distribution, indicating a strong desire for at least some change.



- The responses that yielded the highest level of frequency in the scatterplot are also concentrated around the consensus point and biased both upward and to the right. This suggests that momentum may be growing for a degree of change greater than the consensus presented here.
- A number of the issue-related questions also indicated a strong desire for change. This includes an acceptance of greater diversity in housing options, neighborhood-based commercial development, an expansion of transportation options, and promotion of environmentally-friendly practices.
- There is clear alignment and mandate for change around several key themes, and some implicit indication on some others – these need to be acted upon.

8.3 SPREAD OF RESULTS

While a point of consensus has been defined, there is actually a big spread of results along the diagonal continuum. This suggests that while participants in the process can clearly place themselves somewhere within the defined scenario space, and within an environment of change, there is some disagreement as to the extent that change either could or should occur. This has a number of potential implications, including:

- The diversity of perspectives presented here creates a difficult balancing act for the City Council and City – no matter the issue, the City is likely to face strong vocal opponents to any change, as well as others who believe it does not go far enough. This requires a degree of patience and maturity for the City Council. This is likely to increase over the next several months as the Vision Edina process intensifies.
- For citizens this means they must be willing to recognize the best choice for all, which will often not directly align with their own desires. This is especially important in areas where community input will be required.
- The survey and workshop process identified a number of areas of consensus as well as a number of areas lacking clear definition. The process to date has not discussed either priorities or implementation of policy. Each of these topics is likely to generate spirited debates.

8.4 VISION TARGET

The timeframe framing this process has been defined as a vision of the future 20 to 30 years from now. Most analysis of this type, along with previous comprehensive plans developed by the City are generally based on a 20 year forecast or perspective. However, this process is also strongly influenced by the existing views of people, along with the existing mix of residents and does not take into account how societal and generational views and values may evolve and change over next 20 years.

- The challenge in this process is do you aim at the consensus point, as defined from today's perspective, or do we also account for where we anticipate where this same consensus may evolve in the future?
- Non-resident stakeholders and younger respondents are more receptive to and supportive of change than older or longer-term residents. The community must decide how extensively they wish to consider the competing perspectives of each of these groups, especially as it crafts development and other strategies that will have long-term benefits.



- Future focused community – the trends revealed in the Cities of the Future appeared to be well outside the general thinking or awareness of city residents. Respondents generally recognize this, in that a number of residents indicated a preference for a community in the future that looks vastly different to today. However, the community lack of awareness of emerging trends and implications may lead them to be ill equipped to meet these challenges.

8.5 LOCAL ECONOMY

One of the issues that was notably largely absent in the think tank deliberations, survey responses and community workshops, was meaningful discussion about the local economy. Despite employing some 47,000 people the local economy, its evolution was not the subject of significant discussion. This again is not especially surprising given the large number of residents that commute to work in other communities on a daily basis. Residents seem to be conflicted as to whether the City should embrace the image of a “bedroom community.” However, the Vision Edina process, and Future IQ Partners’ observations in the region have suggested that:

- Edina possesses enormous potential to begin to define economic competitive strengths around a medical cluster, engineering services, the development of neighborhood-based specialty retail sectors and smart economy, beginning with the Pentagon Park redevelopment.
- There is also a significant opportunity for smaller, family-owned businesses consistent with the desire for more neighborhood commercial zones in the model of 50th and France Avenue.
- The community also has significant potential to support new startups because of the wealth present in the community and support for incubator and co-working spaces. Promotion of these trends will support the expressed desire to develop more opportunities to both live and work in the community.
- The City’s labor market and commuting dynamics also have a significant impact on a number of other issue areas, ranging from housing mix to transportation options.

8.6 CONCLUSION

The City of Edina has enjoyed a long and prosperous history and has assumed the role of a community of choice or aspirational destination in the Twin Cities. It possesses a strong housing market, prosperous resident mix, a world-class education system, and high quality amenities. This combines to make Edina the envy of many of its neighbors.

In launching the Vision Edina process, the City Council and City staff clearly recognizes the importance of each of these strengths in securing the future vitality of the City. They have further decided to frame this process in as positive or constructive a light as possible in order to encourage residents to consider the possibilities of what Edina could become. The dialogue that has resulted speaks of the City’s potential and has identified a number of areas where the City could emerge as a regional and national leader.



The conversation that has developed around the Vision Edina process, as presented in these findings also speaks to the role of scale in development, and the promotion of land uses that are consistent with existing properties. This conversation is similar to others occurring in a number of communities of all sizes around the country. There is no one-size-fits-all solution for this or any of the other issues presented in this work. Rather, what it speaks to is a strong desire to continue the conversation.

The next steps are up to the residents and stakeholders of the City of Edina to define. No matter what they choose, the future of the community certainly looks bright!

9.0 ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people across the community of Edina willingly provided their time and support to the Vision Edina process. In many cases, attending workshops, convening meetings and encouraging fellow residents and stakeholders to participate.

The City Council and the City Manager, Scott Neal, generously provided their time and insight to encourage and refine the process. Their continued endorsement and support ensured this process gained traction and interest within the community. Thanks must go to the City of Edina staff, for their management and support of the entire process, and special thanks to Karen Kurt (Assistant City Manager), Heather Branigin (Executive Assistant) and Lindy Crawford (City Management Fellow). The photos used through the report were largely provided by the City of Edina.



10.0 MORE INFORMATION

10.1 INTERACTIVE SURVEY DATA PLATFORM

In addition to the data summaries presented in this report, the survey results from the Vision Edina project can be viewed at www.visionedina.com. The Vision Edina website includes the scatter plots and category graphs, and the capacity to filter the data to explore how views on topics vary between various dimensions such as respondents age, length of time living in Edina, gender and residential location. In addition, this website provides access to copies of the various reports generated as part of this project.

10.2 FUTURE IQ PARTNERS

Future iQ Partners was contracted by the City of Edina to design and facilitate the Vision Edina planning initiative. The Future iQ Partners team that designed the process; facilitated the community workshops, and prepared the reports and data analysis were the following:



David Beurle, CEO Future iQ Partners

As CEO of Future iQ Partners, David specializes in creating future planning approaches for the use in City, community and organizational settings. David has worked in the field of organizational and City economic and community planning for over 20 years. His work in community and economic development has earned his work international, national and state awards.



Dr. Jeffrey A. Sachse, Senior Economist

Jeffery specializes in detailed economic analysis and data interpretation. He has worked on industry clusters, City partnerships, workforce development and economic trends and indicators. He has led research and development projects, and conducted program monitoring. His has detailed local knowledge of the economic landscape in the Midwest, having worked professionally in this area for over a decade.



For more information on the visioning process, or Future iQ Partners please visit us at www.future-iq.com or email info@future-iq.com



10.3 VISION EDINA AND CITY OF EDINA

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE VISION EDINA PROJECT
AND THE CITY OF EDINA, PLEASE CONTACT:



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